

What is claimed is:

1. A gatekeeper connected to an H323 network,
comprising:

a first message receiving section which
receives a gatekeeper discovery message from an end
5 point;

a transport data transmitting section; and
a control section which determines whether
said gatekeeper has the lightest load among a
plurality of gatekeepers including said gatekeeper,
10 and controls said transport data transmitting section
to transmit transport data to said end point in
response to the gatekeeper discovery message, when it
is determined that said gatekeeper has the lightest
load.

2. The gatekeeper according to claim 1, wherein
said control section controls said transport data
transmitting section not to transmit transport data in
response to the gatekeeper discovery message, when it
5 is determined that said gatekeeper does not have the
lightest load.

3. The gatekeeper according to claim 1, wherein
said control section comprises:

a storage section which stores a load state
list indicative of existence of any of said plurality

5 of gatekeepers having lighter loads than said gatekeeper; and

a first control section which refers to said load state list to determine whether said gatekeeper has the lightest load among said plurality of

10 gatekeepers including said gatekeeper, and controls said transport data transmitting section to transmit transport data to said end point in response to the gatekeeper discovery message, when it is determined that said gatekeeper has the lightest load.

4. The gatekeeper according to claim 3, wherein said control section further comprises:

a load state notice message receiving section which receives a load state notice message from one of
5 said plurality of gatekeepers as a notice transmitting gatekeeper, said load state notice message including a load of said notice transmitting gatekeeper;

a calculating section which calculates a load of said gatekeeper as a self-load; and

10 a second control section which extracts the load of said notice transmitting gatekeeper from said load state notice message, and compares the extracted load and the self-load, and writes an identifier of said notice transmitting gatekeeper at least into said
15 load state list, when the extracted load is lighter than the self-load.

a load state request message transmitting
section, and

each of said plurality of gatekeepers selectively replies said load state notice message to said gatekeeper based on a load of each of said plurality of gatekeepers.

a load state request message receiving
section which receives said load state request message

a load state notice message transmitting
section, and

wherein said second control section extracts the load of said each gatekeeper from said load state request message, and compares the extracted load and the load of said gatekeeper as a self-load, and controls said load state notice message transmitting

section to transmit a load state notice message with
15 the self-load and said identifier of said gatekeeper
to said each gatekeeper, when the extracted load is
lighter than the self-load.

7. The gatekeeper according to claim 6, wherein
said second control section discards said load state
request message, when the extracted load is not
lighter than the self-load.

8. A load distributing method in a communication
system which comprises a network; an end point
operatively connected to said network; and a plurality
of gatekeepers including first and second gatekeepers,
5 said method comprising the steps of:

(a) receiving a gatekeeper discovery message
from said end point in said first gatekeeper;

(b) referring to a load state list which
indicates identifiers of ones having lighter loads, of
10 said plurality of gatekeepers, in said first
gatekeeper to determine whether said first gatekeeper
has the lightest load among said plurality of
gatekeepers; and

(c) transmitting transport data to said end
15 point in response to said gatekeeper discovery message
in said first gatekeeper, when it is determined that
said gatekeeper has the lightest load.

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9. The load distributing method according to claim 8, further comprising the step of:

(d) ignoring said gatekeeper discovery message, when it is determined that said gatekeeper
5 does not have the lightest load.

10. The load distributing method according to claim 8, further comprising the steps of:

calculating a load of said first gatekeeper
as a first load;

5 receiving a load state notice message
including a load of said second gatekeeper as a second
load from said second gatekeeper;

extracting said second load from said load
state notice message;

10 comparing said first load and said second
load; and

writing an identifier of said second
gatekeeper into said load state list, when said second
load is lighter than said first load.

11. The load distributing method according to claim 10, further comprising the step of:

transmitting a load state request message
with an identifier of said first gatekeeper and said
5 first load to said second gatekeeper.

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receiving said load state request message
with an identifier of said second gatekeeper and said
second load;

comparing the extracted second load and said first load; and

13. The load distributing method according to claim 12, further comprising the step of:

discarding said load state request message,
when the extracted second load is not lighter than
said first load.